

SNOW FINDS LIFE BUSY AS CABINET MINISTER

MPP'S Job to Serve Needs of Constituents

Toronto (Special to the Herald) — Life is much busier now than it was when James Snow, Halton East MPP, since his appointment to the cabinet in the recent shuffle staged by the new premier, William Davis.

On top of his normal duties as a government private member, he assumes new responsibilities.

One major task is to fill in for other cabinet ministers at speaking engagements and official functions where a minister, for illness or other reason, cannot attend.

Within a week of the appointment he travelled to Sudbury for the minister of education, Robert Welch, he said.

When the new cabinet was announced Mr. Davis said Mr. Snow would also be given substantial duties related to the reorganization of government and legislative business.

What these are, Mr. Snow said, has still to be decided.

So far appointment to the cabinet has meant only minor changes in his daily schedule. He must attend cabinet meetings on Wednesday mornings.

Dawn comes at 6.30 a.m. at the Snow household, in Hornby, almost the exact centre of Halton East.

After a light breakfast of cereal and juice he returns or answers telephone calls. Many of his constituents know he will be in at that time.

Some times too he reads his mail and dictates replies into a dictaphone. Mr. Snow prefers using the machine to dictating directly to his secretary. This way, he says, he can answer mail at home, at his office in Oakville, at Queen's Park whether his secretary is around or not.

LEAVES OFFICE

About 7.45 a.m. he leaves for the office of his construction

camp seeking the Premier as a board member, comments from the warden of Halton county, and a question from the Georgetown baseball team about an athletic assistance programme.

"I try to answer a query the day I receive it," he says. He reads all the local newspapers carefully to keep up-to-date with public opinion. He especially pursues letters-to-the-editor which he said help him keep his hand on the pulse of the riding.

The MPP is an answer to the problem of facelessness in government and citizen alienation from the bureaucracy, he said.

"If people have a problem of whom to contact they should call or write me. That's what I'm here for," he said.

It took him almost a year from the date of his election to learn the inner workings of the government so he could efficiently and effectively go to the precise area he was seeking, he said.

Constituents should avail themselves of his knowledge he said.

James Snow is a tall, heavy-set man, who dresses fashionably in a double-breasted suit with bright ties. He has grey hair and thick sideburns. He seems to chain-smoke cigars or a pipe when in his office, but he does not touch cigarettes.

He said politics involved him with people, and he likes that. He was a shy type, not forward at all, he said. Politics gave him the opportunity to meet a wide variety of people.

With a touch of pride he mentions his 20-year perfect attendance record with a riding Lions Club. He said he believes in civic service and public duty.

MONEY REASONABLE

"I did not enter politics to make money," he said. While he said he believes salaries are "adequate and reasonable" now for an MPP, he said he would have run even on the old scales of pay.

"I wanted to represent the riding," he said.

Mr. Snow's elevation to the cabinet has not diminished his belief in the importance of the backbencher. Any elected representative can contribute to the initiation and development of government policy, he said.

He said it can be done in the in house committee, or even on the floor of the legislature.

Last September, he said, the government adopted a private member's bill he introduced to bring uniform building codes to the province. Since then, he said, political figures in British Columbia, Quebec, Manitoba, and New Brunswick have all written asking him for copies of his presentation.

The famed "dog and cat bill" which drew more mail to Mr. Snow's desk than any other piece of legislation in his four years as an MPP, was another example of backbencher influence, he said.

In committee he moved for appointment of the Housing Society president to the governing body, but was defeated. He raised the issue again on the floor of the House and saw it passed.

A third role of the backbencher in the government party is to sit on a special task force or act as government representative on various provincial agencies.

Mr. Snow is a director of the Ontario Housing Corporation. Other members may refer questions to him rather than the responsible cabinet minister when seeking information.

He attends five meetings a month with the corporation, and is deeply involved with it on the policy making sphere. Even though he has been elevated to the cabinet he said he will probably remain with the corporation.

He will shortly be visiting Kenora and Dryden to inspect projects and meet with municipal officials who are seeking more provincially assisted housing for their areas.

In Oakville what he calls a "completely new concept" in senior citizens' housing is being

built. He instigated it, and he sent to Rud Whiting, Halton MP.

The cabinet presided over by Premier William Davis contains all his opponents of the leadership campaign. Mr. Snow was not one of them, being a supporter of Mr. Davis from the beginning.

The man has the ability and confidence to be an excellent premier, he said. Mr. Davis is set apart from his competitors by his legislative ability, and his experience. His age was important, too. "Only 17 days younger than me," Mr. Snow said. Both men are 41.

Theories about a Tory establishment or dissatisfaction in the party are false, he said. Allan Lawrence was a close contender simply because that was "the way the votes counted" He was a colourful individual with a strong person-

al following.

What attracted Mr. Snow to politics in the first place were two earlier premiers of Ontario, whom he said were great leaders, John Roberts and Leslie Frost.

DISRUPTS HOME LIFE

Mr. Snow enjoys the political life, although it forces him from the house five nights out of six.

"Being away a great deal does disrupt my home life, although my wife enjoys participating in functions," he said. They have four young children.

School children are a prime concern of his. He encourages school groups to attend legislative sittings, and as often as possible speaks to them afterwards when he will explain what they saw and answer their questions.

He said the future looks

good. "I'm sure Mr. Davis will make a lot of changes," he said. He predicts an election — "probably" — in 1971.

in Hamilton. He died in 1965. Mrs. Smith moved to Toronto, then to Georgetown where she resided in the Berwick Hall apartments.

During the war years she was in charge of women volunteer workers at the Canadian Red Cross canteen in Hamilton. She was a silver cross mother, her son Jack being a 1942 casualty. He was killed in a flying mission over Germany. Another son William died in 1920.

She leaves a brother, Harold Coffin of Charlotte, North Carolina. A brother Percy Coffin predeceased her.

Rev. Norman Young of Knox Presbyterian Church conducted the funeral service at the Harold C. McClure Funeral Home. Interment was in Hamilton cemetery.

Served Red Cross Canteen in War Years

A former Georgetown woman who returned to make her home here in 1963, Mrs. Vernon A. Smith died recently in Georgetown hospital.

The former Ethel Winnifred Coffin, she was the daughter of Arthur and Mary Ida Bennett Coffin and was born in Toronto in 1892 and came to Georgetown with her parents three years later. She attended public and high school here.

Following their marriage in 1914, Mr. and Mrs. Smith lived

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Jim likes to smoke a pipe when working in his office



The tall, fashionably-dressed cabinet minister from R. R. 2, Georgetown, makes good use of the dictaphone in his office. Here, he hands a recording to secretary Miss Dian Book for typing.



Discussing a point with William Newman, Conservative MPP for Ontario South riding

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